

The Director of Central Intelligence

Washington, D.C. 20505

National Intelligence Council

DDI #05484-85/1

18 November 1985

Mr. Bernard F. McMahon  
Staff Director, Senate Select Committee  
on Intelligence  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Bernie:

In response to your letter of 30 October, in the past five years there have been three DCI assessments:

- National Strategies and the Global Economy, 26 March 1982;
- Economic Force for Change in the Third World, 21 December 1984; and
- Soviet Ballistic Missile Defense Program, 1985. 25X1

Over the years, the National Intelligence Council has used a variety of types of publications to communicate analysis and information to policymakers. The National Intelligence Estimate and Special National Intelligence Estimate are the most familiar of these. However, we also do the following:

- the Interagency Intelligence Memorandum, which is coordinated at the working level in the Intelligence Community and intended primarily to communicate the results of research or basic data where an authoritative community view is thought to be useful. Examples of papers done of this kind include 25X1  
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such as the readiness of Soviet Ground Forces (November 1982), Soviet Wartime Management: The Role of Civil Defense for Leadership Continuity (November 1983), Prospects for Anti-US Terrorism (November 1984), and Capabilities and Order of Battle of Vietnamese Forces in Cambodia (October 1985).
- the Interagency Intelligence Assessment, which also is coordinated at the working level but usually is very

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brief and done in response to a request from a policymaker for a community view on issues such as the number of Cubans in Nicaragua, Israel's Use of Cluster Munitions in Lebanon (June 1982), Libya/Sudan: The 16 March Bombing [of Khartoum] (March 1984), Soviet Approach to Nuclear Winter (December 1984), and Indian Perspective on the Gandhi Visit (May 1985).

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In addition, the NIOs and the Analytic Group of the National Intelligence Council also occasionally produce the National Intelligence Council Memorandum, a document which is a product solely of the NIC. It provides a vehicle for original or particularly interesting analysis to be provided to the policymaker without any outside coordination. A large number of these were published between 1977 and 1981. Since 1981, 28 have been produced. They include such topics as The Soviet Bloc Financial Problem as a Source of Western Influence (April 1982), Evolving LDC Debt Crisis (July 1983), and The Dynamics of Nuclear Proliferation: Incentives and Constraints (September 1985).

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The DCI Special Assessments in two of the three cases were the result of ideas from the DCI and the product of his discussions with CIA analysts and NIOs. The papers themselves are prepared by the appropriate NIO working with CIA's Directorate of Intelligence. In each case, the papers have addressed subjects that the DCI himself has raised and believed to be of particular strategic importance. As the title suggests, in two of the three cases involved, economic developments in the Third World have been the subject. In the case of the Soviet Ballistic Missile Defense Program, the Director suggested splitting a large estimate on Soviet response to SDI and doing essentially a primer on Soviet ballistic missile defense programs with Soviet response to SDI being published later. The objective was to highlight this information and make it available to senior policymakers quickly to better inform ongoing policy discussions.

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While this multiplicity of formats may occasionally be confusing to the outside recipients, each of the formats is reasonably well understood within the Intelligence Community and certainly by the NIOs who select among them, depending on the degree of authoritativeness required, the nature of the assessment being produced (compilation of basic data, the forecast, short-term response to policy questions, etc.). In those cases where a document is coordinated within the Community, it is explicitly so stated.

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In sum, the DCI Special Assessment provides the Director with the occasional opportunity for him and his National Intelligence Officers -- with whatever additional support they deem appropriate from CIA or elsewhere -- to produce thoughtful, finished intelligence on important issues without community coordination and in a format, because of its provenance, intended to capture attention.

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Robert M. Gates  
Chairman

Mr. Bernard F. McMahon  
Staff Director, Senate Select Committee  
on Intelligence

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